

POSITION DESCRIPTION

MONITORING & EVALUATION SPECIALIST - REPORTING

BACKGROUND

USAID/Ghana's Economic Growth (EG) Office has a diverse portfolio and operates under the Assistance Objective (AO) of increasing the competitiveness of Ghana's private sector in domestic, regional and international markets. EG is part of a dynamic USAID assistance program aligned with the Government of Ghana's (GoG) development priorities. The EG portfolio is primarily made up of agriculture projects and also includes projects related to biodiversity and natural resource management, and providing support to the oil and gas sector. The EG Office is responsible for implementing Feed the Future, which is the U.S. Government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative (FTF-GHFSI) in Ghana. The FTF-GHFSI has increased the EG Office's annual operating budget from \$8 million in FY 2008 to \$38 million in FY 2010 and \$52 million in FY 2011. FTF-GHFSI interventions will build upon ongoing activities in the Economic Growth and Health Offices and will promote inclusive agriculture sector-led growth and improved nutritional status. USAID/Ghana's Feed the Future 2011-2015 Multi-Year Strategy was approved in February, 2011.

The EG Office supports and engages Ghanaian public and private leadership to achieve the government's vision and objectives of increased agricultural growth, expanded staple food supplies, and wider access to a variety of nutrients, as described in Ghana's Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan, 2011-2015. The EG Office thereby develops its strategies and program interventions in close coordination with other stakeholders, committing to sound investments through reliable partners, and adjusting program elements based on analyses of performance reports.

Effective management and measuring progress towards the ambitious goal of sustainably reducing hunger and poverty is key to success of the USAID/Ghana development programs. Therefore, in accordance with recent Agency guidance, the EG Office is committed to rigorous activity design, implementation, monitoring and impact evaluation of USG investments to track progress and facilitate results driven planning and performance-based management.

BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

The main objective of the position of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist is to assume full responsibility for overseeing monitoring and evaluation of all EG programs/projects. The M&E Specialist, based in the EG Office, will serve as a member of the EG team, providing leadership in the design, monitoring and evaluation of Performance Management Plans (PMP), ensuring compliance with USAID performance management requirements as indicated in ADS 203, including special requirements of Presidential Initiatives such as Feed the Future, as well as other special concerns such as gender equity and environmental compliance. She/he will also be responsible for writing and compiling of periodic monitoring and reporting documents. The M&E Specialist reports directly to the EG Office Director or his/her designee on issues related to monitoring the performance of EG programs/projects, and advises on impact evaluations and reporting results.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The M&E Specialist will: provide technical assistance to the EG team and its implementing partners in monitoring the performance of programs/projects; track outcomes and results; coordinate semi-annual portfolio reviews; consolidate and update performance information for Operational Plans; validate, co-validate, and complete indicator tables for the annual Performance Plan and Report (PPR) and other reports; conduct site visits and prepare reports documenting performance; and participate in technical reviews of new activities. Specifically:

- A. The incumbent will coordinate the development of EG's Performance Management Plan (PMP) and provide technical assistance in the overall implementation of the PMP. She/he will also ensure compliance with USAID policies and regulations and document program impact. In addition, the incumbent will: develop evaluation, planning, and implementation strategies for EG programs/projects; advise on the formulation of project-level performance management plans to track milestones and report on selected standard performance indicators, as well as custom indicators and outputs; ensure compliance with all specific reporting requirements including gender, environment, and all relevant Presidential Initiatives and Congressional earmarks; ensure that appropriate data collection procedures are used, and develop M&E data tracking system methods for quality checks; meet all PMP reporting requirements, including quarterly, annual reports, and on-demand reporting requests; collaborate with other teams to respond and gather data for annual surveys on aid effectiveness. **40%**
- B. The incumbent will assist the EG team with preparation and analysis of performance data for semi-annual and annual portfolio reviews to determine program progress by the implementing partners and the Mission. She/he will ensure that Agency/Mission/Congressional requirements are being tracked. These include: environment, biodiversity, gender equity, disability, and minority serving institutions. The incumbent will also collaborate with support offices and other EG team members to help prepare accurate pipeline levels and future resource requests as well as procurement plans for portfolio reviews and other purposes; document the portfolio review by preparing minutes to capture issues, discussions and recommendations; and prepare an Action Tracking Sheet to monitor quarterly the progress toward completing tasks developed during the reviews. **30%**
- C. The incumbent will collaborate with other members of the EG team and other offices in consolidating internally consistent information for the Mission's overall PMPs, Operation Plans and Geographic Information System (GIS); determine which indicators remain relevant and useful as the nature of activities change over time; and assess the extent to which performance indicators remain relevant and useful as the nature of the activities change over time, and recommend modifications as appropriate. **10%**

- D. The incumbent will collaborate with other EG team members, the Mission's M&E Specialist, the USDA-LSU Monitoring, Evaluation, and Technical Support Services (METSS), and other EG implementing partners to determine, validate, maintain, and update the geographically referenced database of performance indicators and other information required for the PMP and GIS. The incumbent will also perform periodic data quality assessments with the Mission's M&E Specialist and METSS to ensure validity, integrity, precision, reliability and timeliness of all performance data; identify any deficiencies and suggest corrective actions; and assist the EG technical team members to maintain electronic and hard copy files to meet the Automated Directives System (ADS) requirements. **10%**
- E. The incumbent will conduct periodic site visits with the Mission's M&E Specialist and Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives/Agreement Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs/AOTRs) to assess partner and Government of Ghana (GoG) data collection methods, and provide technical assistance to implementing partners; and provide written and oral reports to the EG Office on progress, impact, problems and constraints encountered, and opportunities. The incumbent will review project/activity/program statements of work and program descriptions to ensure that methods to measure performance results are adequate and feasible as well as participate in technical reviews and provide comments on draft documents to ensure that monitoring and evaluation plans and reports meet Mission management needs and ADS requirements. The incumbent will be also asked to perform other duties and tasks as assigned. **10%**

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- A. **Education:** A post-graduate degree in a development relevant field or research is a minimum qualification. Degree may include subject areas such as economics, agriculture, agribusiness, international development, project management, survey research, program evaluation, and statistics.
- B. **Prior Work Experience:** A minimum of five years of M&E experience, preferably for an international organization or a non-governmental organization, is required. Experience should include monitoring and evaluation database management, survey research, responsibility for research methods, program evaluation, qualitative and quantitative statistical sampling, information analysis, research techniques and methodologies, report writing, use of MS spreadsheets, and familiarity with Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Prior experience with the USG and familiarity with the principles of development assistance will be useful.
- C. **Post Entry Training:** Orientation and on-the-job training in all aspects of USAID M&E policy and program management; including special requirements for the Feed the Future and other initiatives requirements, use of ADS, managing for results, participation in local and international seminars, workshops; COTR/AOTR training.
- D. **Language Proficiency:** Level IV English (fluent) with strong writing skills is required. Fluency in one or more indigenous Ghanaian languages is desirable. Applicants are requested to submit a writing sample that demonstrates ability to analyze and draw logical conclusions based on analytical findings.

- E. Job Knowledge:** The incumbent should have a solid experience in gathering, analyzing and interpreting complex development data and financial information related to food security programs using different computer programs; solid understanding of the logical framework and results framework models and the management for results approach; thorough understanding of gender issues and gender data collection, analysis and reporting; knowledge of food security and agricultural development issues in Ghana, including the Government of Ghana's (GOG) key institutions, policies, agricultural development sector strategy, major programs, and approach to addressing the needs of vulnerable groups engaged in agricultural production; understanding of the inter-relationships of the various sectors of the Ghanaian economic and social development, particularly for their implications for food security in relation to population, health and nutrition; and a solid grasp of the economic, political, social, and cultural characteristics of Ghana, and an understanding of the history of development assistance programs in Ghana.
- F. Skills and Abilities:** The incumbent must demonstrate the ability to prepare reports and provide briefings to Supervisor/Team Leader, other members of USAID Mission management, Embassy officers, and high-level visitors, as required; prepare progress reports based on data collection, field analysis and assessment of food security activities; undertake field assessments independently; be able to set objectives, plan and follow-through on multiple tasks, as well as demonstrating excellent time management skills critical to managing program reporting, tasks are required. The EG Office is dynamic and responds to the agency's culture of frequent changes. Therefore the candidate must be flexible and be able to respond to frequent changes. In addition, the incumbent should demonstrate strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to work effectively with superiors, colleagues and partners as well as maturity, objectivity, resourcefulness, adaptability and sound professional judgment. The ability to establish and maintain professional and effective contacts with GoG development partners, GoG counterpart agencies, and USAID/Washington offices is required.

The incumbent should be a good team player; able to respond to work assignments on short deadlines; have strong computer skills, including good knowledge of Microsoft Office and GIS; and be willing to travel to rural areas.